



Topic:

Introduction to Kingsley Plantation

Level:

Targeted to high school students but can be adapted for middle school students.

Site of Activity:

The teacher should do this activity on-site and, at the teacher's discretion, use this in conjunction with the guided tour and activities in the teacher backpack.



TIMUCUAN PRESERVE FILM PROJECT '09

Designed by: Pamela James, Teacher to Ranger to Teacher, Sandalwood High School

Goal: Students will understand the peculiar institution called slavery.

Theme: Economics versus Morality

Objectives: Students will be able to:

1. Understand that many people faced and inner conflict between financial stability and survival and their morality.
2. Tour the historic buildings in the park to discuss the uniqueness of each structure.
3. Understand in more depth the life of a planter and slave.

Sunshine State Standards:

1. Understand how social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors contribute to the dynamic nature of regions (SSB 241).
2. Understand past and present trends in cultural interaction and their impact on physical and human systems (SSB 242).

Materials Needed:

1. The teacher should pick up the "Grounds Tour" brochure from the Visitor Center and the teacher backpack if they desire.
2. Three monologues included.
3. The scripts for the various sites in the park.
4. "Timucuan Adventures" DVD.
5. Links to primary source documents, found on the Timucuan Preserve website.

Mini Lesson (pre-activity):

The mini lesson is the tour and the script-reading for each of the various sites at the park.

Work Period:

As the teacher is doing the guided tour around the park, she should read the scripts for the following locations (remember there is a script for each site):

1. By the Kingsley Plantation Sign
2. By the slave cabins (remember that after reading the script you will then tell the students that you would like to read them a monologue from a slave remember to ask the critical thinking question after reading the slave monologue).
3. The main home in the front facing the Fort George River. (remember after reading the script have students to sit on the grass if possible and read the monologue on Anna Kingsley and Zephaniah Kingsley and ask the critical thinking question that goes along with the monologues).
4. The kitchen script
5. The barn script

Closing:

Teacher will have an in-depth discussion on the critical thinking questions allowing each student to voice their opinions and most importantly ask additional questions.

Critical Thinking Question:

Ambrose was a 16 year old teenager, do you see similarities between Ambrose and yourself or other teens that you know. Why would a slave master want his slaves to view him/her as a god?

Critical Thinking Question:

Why would Anna Kingsley a woman of African descent and a slave herself engage in slave ownership?

Critical Thinking Questions:

Is slavery the result of skin color or economic wealth? Explain your answer.

What did Zephaniah Kingsley mean when he said that “slavery is a necessary state of control from which no condition of society can be perfectly free from”?

Multimedia Extension:

Watch the interviews of park staff at the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve located on the “Timucuan Adventures” DVD as a segment on careers.

Have students identify the job titles and duties for the staff members being interviewed. Compare what the staff members describe with the job information students located online.

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Script Location 1: The Kingsley Plantation Sign (Main Entrance)

(Teachers can adapt the scripts for use with their students during the park visit, or use the tour footage on the "Timucuan Preserve" adventures DVD prior to visiting the park.)

Hi, my name is Pamela James and I am on Fort George Island in Jacksonville, Florida.

Welcome to Kingsley Plantation, a unit of the National Park Service. Come take a journey with me into Florida's past and see the beauty of the island, its wildlife, and the historical buildings built by enslaved men, women, and children.

Come with me as we take a look at this 1000-acre island that was the home of Zephaniah Kingsley and his West African wife Anna Kingsley.

Our first stop is the slave quarters.

Script Location 2: Slave Cabins or Quarters

I am standing at the slave quarters, originally there were 32 slave quarters but presently only (23) are still standing. These slave homes were built in the 1820's out of tabby which is a mixture of oyster shells, sand and water. You can clearly see the oyster shells in the walls. The slave cabins form a semi-circle, this pattern is similar to villages in West Africa. Not each cabin is the same size; twenty-eight were small and four were larger. Some have one and 2 rooms. The four cabins at the end of both half of the semi-circle were larger and were given to the slave that helped manage the work assignments and reported to the owner or to skilled slaves who might get a larger cabin as a sign of status. Many slaves worked in the fields planting sugar cane, as well as the daily food crops like peas, potatoes, pumpkins but the main cash crop here was sea island cotton. Sea Island cotton has strong fibers that are long and silky making it very valuable.

On the Kingsley Plantation slaves worked on the task system, this basically meant that each slave was given a specific amount of work to complete daily and when the work was finished the slaves used the remainder of the day to hunt, fish, garden or tending to their own personal needs. Free time was also used for repairing their homes, gathering and growing their own food.

Let's take a look inside the cabin, as you can see it's probably the size of an average bedroom. You have the fireplace used for cooking and warmth and a few small windows. Every activity we have to do in our daily lives today had to be done here cooking, repairing, and sleeping. How does this compare to what your home is like?

Let's head for the plantation house and we'll see what life was like for those who called it home.

Slave Monologue:

(Teachers can show the segment on the "Timucuan Adventures" DVD prior to visiting the park or this monologue could be read out loud by a student or chaperone while visiting the slave quarters. The DVD features an actor portraying an enslaved person.)

(This monologue was written by Pamela James during her work at Kingsley Plantation and is based on historical documents and secondary sources.)

My name is Ambrose Douglass and I am a slave. Ya suh, I been sold a lot of times. Some of my masters didn't believe in keeping a house, a horse or a darky after he had a chance to make some money on him. I am 16, a young man. I didn't see why I should be anybody's slave, I'd run away every chance I got. Sometimes they near killed me. My masters never did get their money's worth out of me, though I worked as long as they stood over me, then I ran around with the gals or sneaked off to the woods. We worked on the task system so when I waz done with my task for the day I would sneak off the plantation and down the road to another plantation to see a girl I like. Hopen those patrols don't catch me. Sometimes they used to put dogs on me to get me back.

You know some masters are mean, and they beat you, starve you and tie you up when you didn't work and kill you if you ran.

I am a young man and I like to et. Course, I didn't always get too much to eat, corn meal, a little piece of fat meat now and then cabbages, greens, potatoes, and plenty of molasses. When I worked up at the house I et just what the master et. Sometimes he would give it to me his-self. When he didn't, I et it anyway.

Some masters tell their slaves to go to the master's church to hear the white minister. The minister would tell us to honor our masters and mistresses, and to have no other god but them, as we cannot see the other god, but we can see our master and mistress.

Critical Thinking Questions:

Ambrose was a 16 year old teenager, do you see similarities between Ambrose and yourself or other teens that you know?

Why would a slave master want his slaves to view him/her as a god?

Script Location 3: Owner's home, out front, facing the Fort George River

I am now standing in front of the plantation owner's house which faces the Fort George River – wow! what a difference from the slave quarters. When Zephaniah and his wife Anna settled here in 1814 Fort George Island was isolated and reachable only by boat. Most plantations were located along the waterway because transportation by ship or boat was the easiest way to get crops to the market or bring in supplies.

The Kingsley plantation home built in 1798 is the oldest plantation home in Florida still standing. This two story home was built for comfort. Originally you had the living and dining area downstairs. Upstairs there were four bedrooms which could only be accessed by an outside stairway on the porch. There were windows on all sides of the rooms in order to allow for breezes and cross ventilation.

Some special features of the house includes the widow walk on top of the house, which is a platform on the roof where the wife could go up there and look to see if her husband's ship was approaching or to see the slave quarters.

Anna Kingsley Monologue:

(Teachers can show the segment on the “Timucuan Adventures” DVD prior to visiting the park or this monologue could be read out loud by a student or chaperone while visiting the slave quarters. The DVD features an actor portraying Anna Kingsley.)

(This monologue was written by Pamela James during her work at Kingsley Plantation and is based on historical documents and secondary sources.)

I am an old woman now 67 years old. My mind and memory is good but my body is feeble in strength. Zephaniah's sister is trying to take away my property. I won't let her take what rightfully belong to my children. I am going to write a will, and I will leave three thousand dollars and (4) slaves to my beloved daughter Martha Baxter. I will also leave my children one twelfth of what the United States government owes us from our loss in the war of 1812. I want my daughter to use the money in any way she sees fit. She has my permission to loan out the money or sell the slaves if she see fit.

Dear sweet Martha, please make sure you pay your mother's funeral expenses and my other debts. Make sure you pay for the education of my granddaughter Isabella. Then you can divide whatever is left between you, Mary and John. I have confidence in you my daughter. I know you will make good judgments for your sister, brother and their children.

And when you see fit to divide the money equally between my daughters, daughters. Yes, whatever is left from this property and sale of my slaves Joe, Polly, Elizabeth and Julia should be received by my daughter Martha to have and to hold forever. I don't want anyone to have anything to do with what I leave except for my beloved Martha.

I will write this will to prevent lawsuits, and if anyone try's to disturb my last will and testament I want Martha to withhold from them any participation in my effects.

Critical Thinking Question:

Why would Anna Kingsley a woman of African descent and a slave herself engage in slave ownership?

Zephaniah Kingsley Monologue:

(Teachers can show the segment on the “Timucuan Adventures” DVD prior to visiting the park or this monologue could be read out loud by a student or chaperone while visiting the slave quarters. The DVD features an actor portraying Zephaniah Kingsley.)

(This monologue was written by Pamela James during her work at Kingsley Plantation and is based on historical documents and secondary sources.)

Agriculture is the foundations of wealth in the southern states. I want to save the kind of labor which produces it and the people who seems to be able to adapt under all circumstances and make it profitable for the southern capitalist like myself. Slavery when associated with cruelty and injustice is revolting to every humanitarian mind. But when slavery is associated with a willingness to do good and be charitable, slavery as we call it can just be an ordinary condition of life.

I wrote an essay on the subject of slavery called “A Treatise on the Patriarchal Slave System”. It is clear that a person of white complexion is not fitted for hard work in the sun. It is evident that dark complexion people have a greater capacity to endure labor. It has been my observation that people of white complexions are unfitted by nature for the hot climate. It has been many years since the first white settled among these southern swamps and their descendants have not improved in their longevity. Well I believe that those healthy affluent people in the north fail to see the hardships of the white population in comparison to the comfortable state of the southern Negro. If the negro is under and humane master who provides for the physical wants of his servants, wife, and children in sickness, health, and old age and in return only wants competent labor. Well if you ask me, the Negro will enjoy a happier state of existence than the poor white man who’s burdened with family, cold and hunger, and moral tyranny.

The door of liberty is open to every slave who can find the means to purchase himself. Slavery is a necessary state of control from which no condition of society can be perfectly free from.

Critical Thinking Questions:

Is slavery the result of skin color or economic wealth? Explain your answer.

What did Zephaniah Kingsley mean when he said that “slavery is a necessary state of control from which no condition of society can be perfectly free from”?

Additional Stops

The following stops are included on the “Timucuan Adventures” DVD segments. They are also similar to the stops as they are written on the Grounds Tour brochure.

Script Location: Barn

Another busy place on the plantation was the barn, and like the slave quarters this barn is made of tabby. The barn served many purposes it was used for storage it was a home for the animals, it was a work place and a living quarter for some slaves. But most importantly, on those rainy days when many slaves gathered here to prepare the cotton before it could go to the market, it was a time of story-telling and the blending of the cultures and dialects from the continent of Africa.

Script Location: Garden

The garden was vital for sustaining the lives of the planter and the slaves. During spring, summer and fall the garden grew daily food like potatoes, okra, and pumpkin. But the main cash crop on Kingsley plantation was sea island cotton. The sea island cotton grew best along the coast of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. Sea Island cotton has long strong fibers which make it very valuable. The slaves on the plantation grew the cotton, picked it and removed the seeds before it was shipped to market.

Script Location: Kitchen

As you can see the kitchen is a separate building, this was done to keep the heat, noise, smells, and most importantly the threat of fire away from the main house. Even though the kitchen was for the owner’s family it was also a meeting of cultures.

When the slaves cooked and prepared meals for their owner they blended recipes from their African ancestors with favorite recipes from the owner’s family. After the slaves prepared the meal they would carry it to the house to be served. Water was brought in by a slave from a nearby well.

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Script Location: Well

The well is a center piece on the plantation. The well provides water for indoor and outdoor purposes. The well provides water for drinking, preparing food, bathing, washing clothes, doing dishes and much more.

The well was also used for outside purposes like for the yard, garden and animals. The well was a communal place where people came and went and had an opportunity to communicate with each other.

Script Location: Palmetto Avenue:

Palmetto Avenue is a sand and oyster shell road that travels thru miles of swamp and mangrove jungle which provides a land approach to the main house. This road was the original road that slaves traveled up and down each day going to and from the fields. The road is lined on both sides by palms trees. Many of these palm trees were planted by the slaves themselves in the 1800's.

Because Kingsley Plantation is on Fort George Island there was only one way to get on the island and off the island in the 18th century and that's the river.